

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium for storing an electronic data record of an invoice, the electronic data record comprising:

a data field for including an identification of a current state of the processing of the invoice, wherein:

the current state is assigned by a user through a dialogue displayed on a display device;

the data field is used for starting a workflow which depends on the current state;

the data field has a first link to ~~the current state stored in a~~ description state-value table comprising identifications of a plurality of states of the processing of the invoice and corresponding descriptions of the plurality of states; and

the data field has a second link to ~~state-value~~ an instruction table further ~~comprises an instruction which depends on the current state and is~~ comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding instructions automatically executable by a computer.

2-4. (Canceled).

5. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium for storing the electronic data record of claim 1, wherein the data field has a third link to the state-value an event table ~~comprises an assignment of the current state to an event~~ comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding events which can occur during the processing of the invoice.

6. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium for storing the electronic data record of claim 1, wherein the electronic data record is at least partially accessible via the Internet and wherein the content of the data field or a comment field is editable via the Internet.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium for storing the electronic data record of claim 1, wherein the data field has a fourth link to the state-value a proposal table ~~comprises one or more state-dependent~~ comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding proposals for changing the current state.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for processing an electronic data record of an invoice, the electronic data record comprising a data field ~~for~~ including an identification of a current state of the processing of the invoice, the method comprising:
displaying a dialogue on a display device for enabling the current state to be entered by a user;

assigning the current state entered by the user to the data field, wherein the data field has a first link to ~~the current state stored in a~~ description state value table comprising identifications of a plurality of states of the processing of the invoice and corresponding descriptions of the plurality of states, and further the data field has a second link to an instruction table comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding instructions ~~an instruction which depends on the current state and is~~ automatically executable by a computer; and

starting a workflow which depends on the current state.

9. (Canceled).

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, further comprising:
performing at least one of selecting, sorting, evaluating, and analyzing the invoice according to the current state.

11. (Canceled).

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the current state is selectable by the user according to predefinable events.

13. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the method is for use in business software, particularly in an enterprise resource planning software.

14. (Currently Amended) A computer system for processing an electronic data record of an invoice, the electronic data record comprising a data field ~~for~~ including an identification of a current state of the processing of the invoice, the computer system comprising:

memory including program instructions;

input means for entering data;

storage means for storing data;

a processor responsive to the program instructions for displaying a dialogue for enabling the current state to be entered by a user;

program instructions for assigning the current state entered by the user through a dialogue displayed on a display device to the data field, wherein the data field has a first link to the current state stored in a description state-value table comprising identifications of a plurality of states of the processing of the invoice and corresponding descriptions of the plurality of states, and the data field has a second link to an instructions table further comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding instructions ~~an instruction which depends on the current state and is~~ automatically executable by the computer system; and

program instructions for starting a workflow which depends on the current state.

15. (Canceled).

16. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 14, further comprising program instructions for performing at least one of selecting, sorting, evaluating, and analyzing the invoice according to the current state.

17. (Canceled).

18. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 14, wherein the current state is selectable by the user according to predefinable events.

19. (Original) The computer system of claim 14, wherein the computer system is for use with business software, particularly with an enterprise resource planning software.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium comprising instructions for processing an electronic data record of an invoice, the electronic data record comprising a data field for including an identification of a current state of the processing of the invoice, the computer-readable storage medium comprising instructions for:

displaying a dialogue on a display device for enabling the current state to be entered by a user;

assigning the current state entered by the user to the data field, wherein the data field has a first link to ~~the current state stored in a~~ description state-value table

comprising identifications of a plurality of states of the processing of the invoice and corresponding descriptions of the plurality of states, and the data field has a second link to an instruction table further comprising the identifications of the plurality of states and corresponding instructions ~~an instruction which depends on the current state and is~~ automatically executable by a computer; and

starting a workflow which depends on the current state.

21. (Canceled).

22. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, further comprising instructions for:

performing at least one of selecting, sorting, evaluating, and analyzing the invoice according to the current state.

23. (Canceled).

24. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 24, wherein the current state is selectable by the user according to predefinable events.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the computer-readable medium comprises enterprise resource planning software.

26-27. (Canceled).

28. (Currently Amended) An electronic data structure for an electronic data record according to any one of claims 1[[, 3,]] and 5-7.

29. (Original) An electronic data structure according to claim 28, wherein the electronic data structure is for use with enterprise resource planning software.